



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 107<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 147

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2001

No. 8

## House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 30, 2001, at 2 p.m.

## Senate

TUESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2001

The Senate met at 11:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Dear Father, who has graciously made each of us a never-to-be-repeated miracle of uniqueness, we praise You that we can be ourselves because You love us, we can use our gifts because You gave them to us, and we can grasp the opportunities You provide because You want to surprise us with Your goodness. All that we possess and have become is because of Your providence. The wonder of it all is that it is Your nature to go beyond what You have done or given before. This gives the zest of expectation and excitement to our lives. It also helps us to know that we can come to You with our worries and anxieties, our fears and frustrations, our hopes and hurts.

You know us as we really are and see beneath the shining armor of pretended sufficiency. You know when we are at the end of our tethers and need Your strength; You understand our discouragements and disappointments and renew our hope; You feel our physical and emotional pain and heal us. You have told us that to whom much is given, much will be required. Thank You that You have taught us that of whom much is required, much shall be given. Help us not to be stingy receivers today. You are our Saviour and Lord. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MIKE ENZI, a Senator from the State of Wyoming, led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ENZI). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

### MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business not to extend beyond the hour of 12:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each and with the time being equally divided in the usual form.

### RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Oklahoma.

### SCHEDULE

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, today, we will be in a period of morning business until 12:30 p.m. At 12:30, the Senate will recess for the weekly party conferences until 2:15 p.m. It is my hope that prior to the recess, we will reach a consent agreement for the con-

sideration of four of the President's Cabinet nominations. That agreement would allow for a vote or votes shortly after we reconvene at 2:15 today.

Senators can therefore expect roll-call votes later in the day. Additional nominations are scheduled for hearings during Wednesday's session. It is hoped that we can expedite those nominations for full Senate action.

I thank my colleagues for their attention.

### MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 73, S. 74, S. 75, S. 76, S. 78, AND S. 79

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I understand there are six bills at the desk due for their second reading. I ask that they be read consecutively.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 73) to prohibit the provision of Federal funds to any State or local educational agency that denies or prevents participation in constitutional prayer in schools.

A bill (S. 74) to prohibit the provision of Federal funds to any State or local educational agency that distributes or provides morning-after pills to schoolchildren.

A bill (S. 75) to protect the lives of unborn human beings.

A bill (S. 76) to make it a violation of a right secured by the Constitution and laws of the United States to perform an abortion with the knowledge that the abortion is being performed solely because of the gender of the fetus.

A bill (S. 78) to amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to make preferential treatment an unlawful employment practice, and for other purposes.

A bill (S. 79) to encourage Drug-Free Schools and Safe Schools.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I object en bloc to further proceedings on these bills at this particular time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the rules, the bills will be placed on the calendar.

The Chair recognizes the Senator from Vermont.

#### EDUCATION

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, this morning, I, Senator KENNEDY, Congressman BOEHNER, the Chairman of the House Education and Workforce Committee, and Congressman MILLER, the ranking Democrat of that committee, met with President Bush to discuss his very ambitious education initiative.

The package the President is putting forward today contains several areas where there is general, bipartisan agreement for providing the tools necessary for every child to receive a quality education.

These areas include: strengthening accountability to improve student performance; providing the funds necessary to prepare, recruit, and train high quality teachers; developing reading initiatives to ensure that all students will be able to read by the third grade; strengthening early childhood programs; creating a math/science partnership for states, colleges, and universities to strengthen K through twelve math and science education; providing activities related to technology as a means to boost student achievement; and giving school districts the flexibility to be innovative in implementing reform.

All Americans agree that every child in this country deserves a high quality education. We at the federal level must remember that we do not necessarily have all the answers for making high quality education accessible to all students. It is parents, teachers, principals, superintendents, school personnel, state and local school board officials, and students that have many of the answers.

The proposal outlined by President Bush is a very good framework which will go a long way in providing the assistance that is needed at the state and local level to have a first-rate elementary and secondary educational system.

It is critical that all of us in the Senate and in the House join with the President in making comprehensive education reform our top priority. It is essential to our economic survival.

Almost half of all adults have neither completed high school nor have pursued any type of postsecondary education. Approximately twenty percent of all eighteen year olds do not graduate from high school.

The most recent Third International Mathematics and Science Study indicates that fourth graders performed well in both math and science in comparison to students in other nations. U.S. eighth graders performed near the international average in both math and science, and U.S. twelfth graders scored below the international average

and among the lowest of the participating nations in general science knowledge.

It is perhaps this last statistic which has contributed to the fact that half of all college students must take at least one remedial course at an annual cost of one billion dollars to the nation's public universities.

Last fall, Congress passed the American Competitiveness in the 21st Century Act. This initiative raises the cap on the number of H-1B visas to 195,000 a year for the next three years.

The H-1B bill, which passed the Senate by a vote of 96-1, was needed because this nation is lacking a skilled workforce in the areas of high tech and health care.

I hope that the sense of urgency that prevailed regarding the passage of the H-1B bill will lead all of us to pass an education reform package that will help create a workforce with the skills to meet the needs of our local, regional, national, and international economies.

I look forward to working with the President, Secretary of Education, Rod Paige, all members of the Health and Education Committee, all members of this body and our counterparts in the House to develop a bipartisan bill that passes the Congress with a final vote tally similar to the final vote cast on the H-1B bill.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Nevada.

#### ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, so Members have some idea of what is going to happen, I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Maine be recognized for 5 minutes, the Senator from New Hampshire, Mr. GREGG, for 5 minutes, and the Senator from Illinois for 15 minutes, and the floor would be obtained by the Senator from Texas, Mrs. HUTCHISON.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I amend that by asking unanimous consent that the majority leader be recognized immediately following Senator DURBIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Under the previous order, the Chair recognizes the Senator from Maine.

#### EDUCATION REFORM

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I am very pleased that President Bush today has sent forth to the Congress a package of education reforms that carries through on his promise to make improving the education of our children his top priority. I believe the program he has proposed sets forth the basis for a bipartisan reform bill that I hope we will very shortly consider.

Last August, President Bush traveled to Maine with, Roderick Paige, now his Secretary of Education, and met with educators from my State. I was ex-

tremely impressed with his heartfelt commitment to improving the education of all the children in America, and with the progress that he has made in the State of Texas on what is perhaps the greatest challenge our country faces; that is, narrowing the achievement gap between disadvantaged, low-income children and their more advantaged peers.

We know today that 70 percent of the fourth graders in the highest poverty schools cannot read at the basic level. That is both shameful and unacceptable, and it is a compelling reason why I so strongly support the President's pledge to leave no child behind. I am particularly pleased that his education package contains two provisions that will be very helpful to my home State of Maine.

I am very proud of Maine's public schools. We do very well in providing a quality education for all of our children. But we, like the Presiding Officer, have many school districts that are very small. They find it very difficult to cope with the rules, redtape and paperwork that apply to literally hundreds of Federal programs. The President's proposal would allow school districts to consolidate many of these programs and use the money for their most pressing needs. One school may need to hire more math and science teachers. Another may need to have computers in the classroom. Still another may need to provide a new program for gifted and talented programs. Yet another may have new construction needs. By allowing more flexibility in the use of Federal funds, President Bush has sent a strong signal that he trusts parents, teachers, and local school boards to know what is best for their students and give them the flexibility they need while holding them strictly accountable for improved student achievement. Isn't that what really counts?

We want to be certain that our children are learning. What we don't need is too much of our educators' attention diverted to whether or not they filled out some Federal form correctly. I am very pleased that is an important focus of President Bush's election package.

I am also delighted that he has included legislation authored by Senator KYL of Arizona and myself that will allow teachers to have a tax deduction of up to \$400 to help defray the costs when teachers, out of their own pockets, buy supplies for their classrooms. We all know teachers do this every day. Indeed, according to a study by the National Education Association, the average K-12 teacher spends \$408 annually on classroom materials. By enacting our proposal, we can send a message of appreciation to teachers who are so dedicated to their students that they reach deep into their own pockets to buy supplies to enhance